

Assembly Bill No. 750

CHAPTER 777

An act to add and repeal Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 104335) of Part 2 of Division 103 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to spinal cord injury, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor September 27, 2000. Filed
with Secretary of State September 27, 2000.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 750, Dutra. Spinal cord injury.

Existing law establishes various health research grant programs.

This bill would establish the Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund for the award of grants to conduct basic neurological research into the cure for spinal cord injuries and their effects. This bill would continuously appropriate the fund to the University of California to administer the grants. This program would be operative until January 1, 2006. This bill would be implemented only to the extent that funds are appropriated for its purposes.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) (1) There are approximately 35,000 spinal cord injured persons residing in this state. Spinal cord injury is a condition that leaves individuals paralyzed and afflicts 250,000 Americans.

(2) The care of the 17,000 chronic spinal cord injured quadriplegics alone costs the State of California three hundred forty million dollars (\$340,000,000) annually.

(3) Spinal cord injury has serious physical, emotional, financial, and social consequences for its victims and their families.

(4) There is no established treatment that can cure spinal cord injury.

(5) If cures are found for spinal cord injuries the incidence of quadriplegia will be greatly reduced.

(6) Cures for spinal cord injuries are on the threshold of being discovered.

(b) (1) Research is the primary hope for victims and their families.

(2) Research in spinal cord injury has produced experimental results that are of potential value in facilitating or effecting a restoration of function in damaged spinal cords.

(c) Despite the need to make progress toward treatments or cures for spinal cord injury, there is a lack of sufficient resources in California's postsecondary educational institutions to sustain recent scientific progress with respect to this condition. It is the intent of the Legislature to encourage and support research that has as one of its goals the discovery of methods to restore spinal cord function in humans with spinal cord injury.

(d) (1) The care and rehabilitation of acute, or newly injured, spinal cord injury victims cost the State of California sixty million dollars (\$60,000,000) annually.

(2) Experimental treatments or techniques are currently under investigation, and these treatments may be of potential value in facilitating or effecting a restoration of function in damaged spinal cords if applied to humans within the first few hours after injury.

(3) Progress has been made in chronic spinal cord injury research including the discovery of molecules that promote the growth of chronically injured spinal cord cells involved in movement and sensation. Genes that control regeneration of chronically damaged spinal nerves and chemicals for activating those genes have been discovered. Substances that inhibit growth in the spinal cord have been discovered and antibodies to those inhibitors have been developed. These discoveries may pave the way for significant regeneration of the spinal cord.

SEC. 2. Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 104335) is added to Part 2 of Division 103 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

CHAPTER 2. ROMAN REED SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH ACT OF
1999

104335. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Roman Reed Spinal Cord Injury Research Act of 1999.

104336. (a) There is hereby established a Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund. Notwithstanding Section 13340 of the Government Code, the fund is continuously appropriated to the University of California for the purposes of this chapter.

(b) The fund shall consist of money accepted by the University of California from grants and donations from private entities as well as public moneys transferred to the fund.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

104337. The fund established pursuant to Section 104336 may be expended by the University of California for the award of grants to perform spinal cord injury research projects.

104338. (a) There is hereby created within the University of California the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program.

(b) The program shall promote spinal cord injury research in California as described in Section 104337.

(c) The University of California may establish scientific guidelines and rules and regulations as necessary for implementation of this chapter.

104339. This chapter shall not apply to the University of California unless the Regents of the University of California, by appropriate resolution, make these provisions applicable.

104339.5. This chapter shall be implemented only to the extent that funding for its purposes is appropriated to the Regents of the University of California in the annual Budget Act or another statute.

104339.6. This chapter shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2006, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2006, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 3. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to implement the programs for spinal cord injury research, and thus to reduce pain and suffering and address a pressing health need at the earliest possible time, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

